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HOMŒOPATHY

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

[Extracts from the PENINSULAR JOURNAL OF MEDICINE for March.] 1876, n. s., I,

Students' Resolutions on the Homœopathy Complications.

WHEREAS, At the commencement of this session now drawing to a close, serious fears were entertained by many members of this class that the peculiar, and to most of us before unknown, relations of this Department of Medicine and Surgery to the Homœopathic College would injuriously affect our interests as students of the department; and

WHEREAS, Our alarm was at first excited and afterwards aggravated by statements, arguments und insinuations published and circulated among us by unscrupulous and designing persons, and

WHEREAS, By the advice and encouragement of the Medical Faculty we were induced to disregard those influences and to remain here, notwithstanding those ominous warnings; and

WHEREAS, We have had all the facts and circumstances of the so-called homœopathic complications fully explained to us and have been able to corroborate the statements of the Faculty by a reference to the official records of the department, therefore we, as students, desire before dispersing to our several homes to give expression to our honest convictions in the matter; therefore

Resolved, That we have no reason to regret the determination unanimously adopted by us after the explanation furnished us in the early part of the session by the Faculty to remain here and avail ourselves of the universally acknowledged high advantages of this Medical School.

Resolved, That we have carefully considered and investigated the charges and insinuations which have been so freely urged against our Faculty in connection with the homœopathic complications, and we are fully convinced that they are utterly devoid of foundation in fact.

Resolved, That in our opinion a great deal of the censure which has been expressed toward our teachers in this matter is the result, not so much of a hatred of Homœopathy, (a sentiment which no man or body of men could entertain

more strongly than they do), as of a strong desire from interested or other motives to injure and if possible destroy this Medical School by depriving it of the confidence and esteem which it has always enjoyed from the profession at large.

Resolved, That we, the students of the Department of Medicine and Surgery have now, as ever, the utmost confidence in the integrity and wisdom of the Faculty as our teachers and the guardians of all our interests as students and prospective alumni of the University.

Resolved, That we cordially sympathize with the Faculty in the hopes which they now entertain of obtaining from the State Medical Society at its approaching meeting such advice and countenance as may result in the adoption of wise measures for the final disposal of this, the only obstacle to the prosperity and usefulness of our Alma Mater.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be presented to the Faculty and one to each of the Detroit Medical journals with the request that they be published.

E. W. YOUNG,
T. J. FORHAN,
HENRY B. HATCH,
C. L. DE VINNY,
J. D. STOCKING,

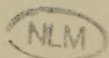
Committee.

Another Word on Homœopathy.

Editor Peninsular Journal of Medicine :

From the amount of literature on the subject it would seem that the Homœopathic question is one of great moment to the profession, and no doubt it is. But before forming an opinion, it is but natural for the readers of all that has been published, to inquire into the motives of those who write upon this much contested subject. Are their motives purely scientific and is their aim purely the advancement of regular medicine and the good of that great institution of which we, as citizens of Michigan, are justly proud, our State University? The fact that the criticisms come from the source they do, the profession, would lead us to answer the question in the affirmative, but after a little inquiry into the relations of those who write, to the subject on which they seek to edify the balance of the profession, we may add a very significant "perhaps." One very suspicious circumstance in the discussion now going on, is the fact that it is led by a journal which is edited by a professor in a rival college, and the only rival college in our State. It is not in the natural order of things that rivals should be sticklers for each other's good; the world, it is to be feared, has not yet approached so near the millennium, and naturally we are a little suspicious at this day, when we see such evidences of that wished for time.

What would be the effect of the state of feeling on the Homœopathic question which the disinterested (?) *friends* of the University are seeking to engender among the profession? The American Medical Association would repudiate the



Medical Department and would refuse to recognize its graduates. The consequence of this would be the disorganization of that department or its passage into the hands of the Homœopaths, and the distribution of the 350 medical students who annually attend the University, among the rival schools of the country. It becomes the profession of Michigan, both as individuals and as a State Society, to cut themselves loose from any influence an interested few, who seek to bring about such a deplorable state of affairs, may have exerted, and with its own interests, which are so clearly interwoven with those of our noble University, at heart, to view the question in all its bearings before giving a verdict which they may afterwards regret. Will the profession unguardedly suffer themselves to be made the cats' paws of individuals smarting under real or imaginary wrongs, or those who seek to aggrandize themselves at the cost of our State University? These are questions, I say, well worth the consideration of the practioners of medicine throughout the State.

It is a wholesome sign that the homœopaths are dissatisfied with the arrangements at Ann Arbor. They have commenced to realize the difficulties under which they must labor in building up Homœopathy under the auspices of the State. They can see, if we cannot, that the arrangement is a bad one for them. They know that to teach their system alongside of regular medicine simply means death to *similia similibus curantur*. They also know that where students have their choice between a regular diploma and a homœopathic one, they will, with very few exceptions, choose the former. Their own common sense (of which I would not hold them entirely destitute) teaches them this, while the workings of the Canada medical act confirm it.

If the regular profession, therefore, were quietly to let this matter alone, it would take care of itself; if, however, they determine to follow the wake of an unscrupulous few, the result must inevitably be what, certain at least among that few most devoutly pray for, viz: The disruption of the Medical Department to the building up of a rival.

No one can deny the right of the people to have taught in an institution supported at their expense, whatsoever they may deem fit. The University is their school, and it is their privilege to have taught their Homœopathy, clairvoyancy, mind-reading, or anything else they pay for.

True medicine can no longer stand aloof from false systems and humbugs which the people tolerate and even encourage. That mode of dealing with them has been tried too long and has added to their prosperity. The people look upon their supporters as persecuted scientists, and with an innate regard for fair play, are determined to let them have a chance. The very thing the homœopaths do not want is what they have so long clamored for, and have at last got in the University, and now that an opportunity has been afforded true medicine let it "fight it out on this line" and vanquish or be vanquished by what they can no longer treat with a silent contempt, but must dignify with the name of an enemy. As Professor Palmer has truly remarked in his statement. "No form of error or deception was ever put down by senseless denunciation without investigation and exposure." Ministers of the gospel do not attempt to put down the sin and iniquity which

abound, by standing back and sneering at and denouncing sinners without attempting to teach them better. Such a policy we would consider ridiculous in anything but medicine.

Then, if the profession of the State really have the good of regular medicine at heart, and wish to advance true science, let it no longer attack the University and its professors who have nobly taken their stand in this matter, but attack their enemy in a common sense way; "a house divided against itself cannot stand."

The fact that the people, through the Legislature, have forced Homœopathy into the University is, perhaps, a lamentable one, but it is there, and shall we give up the school into their possession now that the enemy have commenced boarding the scientific ship? Shall we surrender and leave it in their hands? Rather let us meet them and conquer or be conquered. If scientific medicine cannot stand face to face with the humbug Homœopathy, then it is better it should perish and give the more energetic enemy the field.

O. E. HERRICK.

GREENVILLE, February 22.

EDITOR PENINSULAR JOURNAL OF MEDICINE.—I have wanted to have my say on this absorbing muddle, but have hesitated to do so from the fact that I did not wish to occupy space which might be much more profitably taken up. While I have hesitated, however, others less delicate on this point, have stepped down into the pool before me and have been cured of their *cacoethes scribendi*.

Some unknown friend has kindly sent me a copy of the *Review* for March, with whose communications on the homœopathic question I have been both interested and pained. As you have kindly remarked in your February number, this question is one of vital importance to the profession, and certainly is one which admits of discussion, for like most other questions it has two sides. It strikes me very forcibly, however, from a perusal of the *Review* sent me, that some of the gentlemen engaged in this discussion have taken a departure from the original question to indulge in some very unbecoming personalities. I was brought up at the feet of some of the venerable heroes in this strife, and have since leaving the shadow of their presence delighted to regard them as men whom it would be safe to emulate. Imagine my surprise, therefore, and pain, at seeing the exhibition in the March number of the *Review*. Very fortunately, Mr. Editor, I am better qualified than yourself to express an opinion on the conduct of certain gentlemen, inasmuch as opinions are apparently valuable according to the age of those expressing them, as I have passed several "semi-decades of my professional existence." It is really an "atrocious crime to be a young man!" But the young man who first made this assertion said something in the same connection about gray hairs, which I would respectfully commend to some who have passed more "semi-decades of their professional existence" than either you or I. No weight of years or profusion of whitened locks to back it, can make personal abuse pass current as argument among gentlemen.

I had read the *PENINSULAR JOURNAL* for February and had seen there Professor Maclean's manly and outspoken reassertion of charges made by you against Dr. Sager, which that gentleman had denounced as "calumnious and unfounded." I look in vain to find some further reference to the matter in the *March Review*. Surely Dr. Sager could not have forgotten in the bitterness of his invective to have said something to relieve himself from the undesirable light Professor Maclean's short but pointed note has thrown upon him. Whether he forgot it or no, the question is now one of veracity, with Dr. Sager on the one side, and President Angell and Professors Cheever and Maclean on the other. Who tells the truth?

It seems to me, Mr. Editor, that the "immitigable contempt" which we all conceive for homœopathy has too largely biased the views of the profession on the state of affairs at the University. We have before us an evil which twenty years' experience has taught us cannot be eradicated by any treatment conducted on the "immitigable contempt" basis. It must be grappled with, and it is the duty of the profession to aid in such disposition of it as shall work the least injury to true medicine. These delicate questions of ethics are of minor consideration at the present juncture. This is no time for hair splitting. Neither is it a time when we can afford to allow individuals smarting under either real or imaginary wrongs and deserved slights, or those who are swayed by nothing more than the narrowest self-interest, to modify our views. The facts are right before us and demand attention. Homœopathy has its two chairs in the University and the people, whose institution the University is, gave it them. The opponents of the existing plan, in harmony with the homœopaths themselves, do not object to the fact of the homœopaths having the chairs, but are not pleased because they have not six chairs instead of the two. Now grant them six chairs—a full corps—and what would be the result? If the existence of homœopathic practitioners is an evil, the evil would be aggravated with a rapidity which its warmest friends would welcome. At present the regular Faculty have it in their power to ensure the public, from graduates in homœopathy from the University, a proficiency in those branches, a proficiency in which is the deadliest enemy to both homœopathy and all other kinds of empiricism, to wit: Anatomy, Physiology, and Chemistry. The honest man who is proficient in these fundamental branches cannot long sail under the homœopathic ensign. To give the homœopathic college a full corps of Professors would be to remove the wholesome restraint which the regular Faculty now have it in their hands to exercise over them. No wonder the homœopaths are dissatisfied with the present plan. Nothing more inimical to their interests could well be conceived of.

I will not argue the ethical question involved in the existing plan; for even though the code were a little strained thereby, (which I very much doubt) the great good derived makes the consideration of such trifles ridiculous.

Let the profession look at this matter in a practical matter-of-fact sense. Let it rally to the support of the Faculty in this, their hour of tribulation, and see to it that it does not suffer itself to become blinded to its own interests, either by the specious reasonings of illnatured or disappointed men, or by the whimsical maunderings of hair-splitting technologists, and much less by the rhodomontade

of a "mistriven bantling," whom it would be flattery to dignify by the name of rival, whose very existence depends on the disruption of the Medical Department of our noble University. I have faith in the profession of Michigan, and believe that at the approaching meeting of the State Society the decision will be to allow the barnacle, which has fastened itself to the old ship (to follow the nautical figure), to retain its hold until it looses it voluntarily, to sink into the great ocean of error, never more to trouble or worry with apprehension the noble craft, which has for so many "semi-decades" "braved the battle and the breeze."

ANOTHER ALUMNUS.

[EDITORIAL.]

Homœopathy in the University.

The communications on this fruitful subject, this month, will be read with interest. We are pleased to learn, both from letters published and others whose publication a want of space forbids, that the revulsion of opinion which we predicted would follow the outburst of indignation which naturally greeted the announcement of the present plan of organization, has already commenced to set in. We did not think it possible that the profession could long remain unconvinced of the sinister motives which actuate the leaders of the attack on the faculty for its course in this matter. Unfortunately the question is one on which it requires very little argument to stir up an opinion condemnatory of that course. The profession entertains a natural and justifiable prejudice against homœopathy, and with this prejudice to receive them, the arguments which have been advanced, found ready and willing ears. The profession of Michigan, however, have begun to realize that homœopathy is an existing nuisance, and not by any means an imaginary one, and that it must be dealt with radically; that under the "let alone" and the "contempt" (both "immitigable" and silent) policies, it has grown to be an evil of magnitude, and that the sooner it is grappled with, the sooner will science be relieved of the irritation it causes. To force the Faculty to resign would perhaps be followed by a temporary truce on the part of the adherents of homœopathy who are at the same time friends of the University; but the truce would at best be but temporary, for until the people with their innate love of fair play have given the system "a chance" they will not be satisfied, and will certainly not cease agitating the matter. The present arrangement is of the people's own making and had at its inauguration the approval of the homœopaths. Certainly a more advantageous arrangement for the regular profession could not be desired, and it becomes it, now that it has its opponent "in chancery," for the time being to waive all consideration of ethical points. The homœopaths are heartily disgusted with the existing plan, and nothing could please them more than to have the regular Faculty retire from the field. If they are kept just where the regents with their own approval have placed them, they will shortly throw up the sponge. Of this we are assured. The people regard the existing arrangement as a most equitable one, and a refusal on the part of the homœopaths to abide by it will deprive them of the abundant store of sympathy which the rallying cry of "persecution" has

gathered for them in times past. A refusal on the part of the regular profession, on the other hand, to deal with the facts as they now exist, would be misconstrued. Certainly nothing could be more disastrous to homœopathy than the present plan of organization. By it the system is deprived of the pabulum which gives it life, viz: ignorance of the fundamental principles of medicine. As our correspondent, "Another Alumnus," truly remarks, the regular faculty have it in their power to guarantee that homœopathic graduates from the University are proficient in anatomy, physiology and chemistry, and with a thorough knowledge of these, therapeutics will take care of itself. If the present plan is broken up, by all means let the homœopaths be those who shall do it, and do it they must in the very nature of things, and that too before long.

The series of resolutions passed by the medical class are very suggestive. We are informed that they were adopted without a dissenting vote from either junior or senior students. With this fact before us, we naturally enquire whom the "Independent Students" who figured in the March No. of the *Review* are, or rather is? The imprint of that communication is too striking to be disguised by the subterfuge of a *nom de plume*.

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